1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

some other tribe, the ancient *Caingang* were improvident and consumed their crops as they matured, storing none for the lean months ahead. On the other hand, Horta Barbosa (1913, p. 34) states that maize was as important to them as "wheat for the Europeans." The *Caingang* of the region of San Pedro (Misiones), observed by Ambrosetti (1895, p. 337), opened their clearings in tracts covered with bamboo or sparse bush. They broke the small trees with cudgels or by hand. When the dead trees were dry, they burned them and waited until the beginning of the rainy season for sowing. Women planted crops with digging sticks; they also harvested the crops and carried them home. Men do all the farming in the reservation of Palmas.

In modern groups the tiller of a field is recognized as its exclusive owner; if he dies before harvest, the seedlings are destroyed.

Collecting.—When the *Caingang* were still living in their aboriginal condition, pine nuts of *Araucaria angustifolia*, a tree which has a distribution coinciding more or less with that of the tribe, was fundamental to the native diet. From April to June the Indians gathered in the forests to climb the trees and knock down the ripened fruits, which the women helped to pick up. The climbing technique—also used in getting honey or in robbing birds' nests—was to pass one noose around the feet, another around the tree and the climber's back, and alternately move the two bands up the trunk. The *Aweikoma-Caingang* used only a noose of bamboo strips.

The *Caingang* also collected wild tubers (*Dioscorea* sp.) and a great many wild fruits, such as jaboticaba (*Myrciaria* sp.), pitanga (Myrtaceae sp.), articú (*Annona montana*), pineapples, papaya (*Carica papaya*), caraguatá (*Bromelia* sp.), etc. The starchy pith of the pindo palm (*Cocos romansoffiana*) was formerly an important food item, but today has been supplanted by manioc flour.

Honey and the larvae of bees and especially the larvae of the tambú beetle, which abound in decayed palm and bamboo trunks, are prized delicacies. It is also reported in some sources that the ancient *Caingang* did not despise snakes or lizards.

Hunting.—The *Caingang* spend a large portion of their time hunting alone or in small parties. The dog, treated by some groups as an indispensable auxiliary, is a recent acquisition. Some *Caingang* groups lacked it as late as 1912. To develop the smelling powers of their dogs, the Indians expose them to the smoke of the burnt skin of the game which they are to stalk. They never give them the bones of game animals to gnaw, taking great precaution lest the game be offended.

An entire band participates in a peccary hunt. Old and young, preceded by dogs, endeavor to drive the animals toward hunters, who shoot them with arrows. The *Aweikoma-Caingang* follow droves

1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

Funerary rites.—Death may result from the abduction of the soul by some spirit or by the ghost of a relative. 761

The ghost-soul loves and pities the living whom it has deserted, but the latter fear and abhor the ghost-soul. [Henry, 1941, p. 67.]

Not long ago the *Aweikoma-Caingang* cremated the dead and later collected and buried the bones, along with part of the deceased's property. After a cremation, they extinguished their fires and drilled fire anew. The soul of the deceased loomed as a peril especially to the surviving spouse, who went into retreat, abstained from eating meat, and underwent lustration. To terminate mourning, the mourner's hair and fingernails were clipped, pounded up, and thrown into the water. Then followed a beer festival, accompanied by dances and songs, during which the widow drank beer from a bamboo tube. Keening was not confined to the period of death, but occurred throughout the following year whenever relatives recalled their bereavement. 764 765

The *Caingang* now inter their dead with knees drawn up. Chants are sung around the body during and after its transportation to the grave. One cemetery had two central tumuli, 10 to 20 feet by 18 to 25 feet (3 to 6 m. by 5.5 to 7.5 m.) surrounded by vertically walled ditches. The same tumuli have been reported for the 18th-century *Guayaná*, ancestors of the *Caingang*[8] (fig. 60). The corpse, with funeral deposit, is put in a deep chamber, roofed with palm fronds and earth. The villagers at once desert the settlement and hastily construct new dwellings in the woods. For 3 days they eat only palm shoots (palmitos) and maize boiled by throwing heated potsherds in the water. They destroy part of the deceased's property and impose a strict taboo on his name. 764 768

The grave is periodically visited to renew the mound and to hold a memorial service with lamentations, dancing, chanting, and drinking. For several years, at dawn and dusk the relatives of a dead person utter funeral laments. 765

In days of old if a person died far away from his village, his companions interred his body on the spot but kept his head in a pot. On returning home they celebrated a funeral ceremony and buried the head in the communal cemetery (Horta Barbosa, 1913, pp. 29–30). 766

Life after death.—Before the burial, the shaman, as he rattles his gourd by the corpse, warns the soul about the lurking dangers in the other world. He tells it that it will arrive at two paths, one leading to the cobweb of a gigantic spider and the other to a trap which will 775 764

[8] See Lozano (1873–74, 1: 423): "forman un género de cementerio, que conservan muy limpio; y en él abren sus sepulturas, y en enterrando á alguno, ponen sobre cada una un montón de tierra en figura piramidal, en cuyo remate sientan un medio calabazo, y al pié conservan de continuo un fuego lento que van a cebar todos los dias con leña muy tenue, sus mas cercanos parientes. El calabazo, dicen, es para que no falte al difunto con que beber, si le afligiere la sed; y el fuego para que ahuyente las moscas." On the funerary mounds, see also Serrano (1932, pp. 15–16).

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Their rigorous environment and lack of a close social structure that would automatically provide the aging hunter with helpers or the widow who has children with a husband make the problem of food supply terribly pressing for these people. It was for this reason that Ketédn made my next-door neighbor, Kuthúgn, a member of his household when the latter was still a boy. "When I am dead," said Ketédn, "you will take care of my wife and children." Events showed that Ketédn had acted with foresight—perhaps because of his supernatural power—for he was killed by the Brazilians, and now Kuthúgn was living next door to me with Ketédn's wife who was so much older than he.

A widow who is no longer young has a hard time of it with her small children. Dependent on relatives, she wanders from household to household. At night she sleeps alone with her little child. There is no one to take care of her. Her brother or cousin or brother-in-law give her food when they have it. They share what they have as a matter of course, but when there is little food their children come first and the widow may get only short rations. Kundídn is such a widow. One day she eats at her cousin's house, the next at her brother's, the next at the house of another cousin. When she is sick her cousin Anggló sometimes comes to sit beside her, but if Anggló is away at some secret rendezvous with her lover, or off hunting with her brother, Kundídn often lies alone and miserable. None of the young men would marry a woman of forty with a goiter. But when she is well Kundídn is vigorous and aggressive. She works longer days in the fields than the younger women, she goes out frequently to look for honey, she is an aggressive and determined suitor and she had almost chopped off Véye's leg when the latter deliberately drowned her brother. Whenever I had to pass her house I made a wide circle because I knew that Kundídn would attempt to seduce me in her violent and jocular manner if she caught sight of me. At last she offered me her wild, thin little daughter, Tombá, aged about eleven. "Take her and bring her up," she said. "When she is grown, marry her, and she will keep house for you."

These forms of marriage and the custom of occasional adoption with an eye to the consummation of a future sex relationship are only crystallizations from an almost amorphous social life. Nevertheless, however imperfectly defined, informal, and even casual their sexual arrangements may be, the Kaingáng have made them the center of some kind of relationship that has a permanent value for this society. The casual relationships among young people in our own society that are the outgrowth of passion often serve no other function than to satisfy an overwhelming desire for sexual experience and companionship. Once the couple has drifted apart they have no claims on each other. They are strangers and can never depend on one another for anything. But among the Kaingáng, who literally have

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763 Ndíli handed her some medicine, a pounded
75 herb mixed with water, and she tried to force that between the child's lips; but it only trickled down its chin. Some of the women sought to help her by heating their hands over the fire and laying them on the baby.

763 When it seemed that the child must surely die, Waipó left camp to call the others of our hunting party, for when the ghost-souls are about they may take away the living; and the Kaingáng feel the need for each other's protection and "live piled up."

When I climbed into my hammock that night, there had been a lull in the weeping, but I was awakened several hours before dawn by the frantic keening of Waikomé. One by one, others joined her, and I knew then that the baby was dead. As I watched, the emotion gradually grew more intense; and some went to join the group mourning around the child. There was no play-acting here, no singling out of those whom relationship obliged to weep from those who could just look on. Those who were not affected kept aloof and performed their daily tasks, but those who felt an identification with the bereaved parents mourned with them. Ndíli's second cousin sat with his arm around him and wept, but Ndíli's brother seemed entirely untouched and soon went off to get honey. At last, late in the morning, the parents took up their little bundle and went away, and the sound of their keening came back to us through the forest.

775 That day no one went hunting even though there was no meat in camp.
763 Toward noon Waipó said to me, his voice intense with fear: "You'd better pack your things, because we're going away from here right away. We thought we would stay and kill another tapir, but the baby died; and now we have to move." Who knows what might have happened if they had remained? The ghost-soul of the baby might have taken someone along with it or the ghost-soul which had killed it might kill again. It really does the Kaingáng no good to flee from the ghost-soul, for although it has a tendency to lurk about the place where the bones of its dead body are buried, it also is nomadic like the Kaingáng and may dog their footsteps wherever they go.

763 If we think of death among ourselves and the demonstrations that
152 accompany it among the less inhibited members of our own society; if we disregard for a moment the wild surroundings, the rhythmic keening, the fear of the ghost-soul, and even, perhaps, the useless medicine that was forced between the choking child's lips (although, Heaven knows, that too might be easily duplicated in our society), we cannot but see a striking resemblance between the grief of Waikomé and Ndíli and the members of their group and similar displays in our own society. Among ourselves, anger is generally thrust into the background and often disappears entirely when grief is sincere, but among the Kaingáng it pervades the entire scene and manifests itself in an irritability that may easily become anger. It is

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difficult to talk to many of the Kaingáng on these occasions because they are so easily enraged, and the ethnologist had best hold his tongue and try to appear as small as possible. In death the Kaingáng feel a threat to their security. As they put it, "We are afraid of the ghost-souls; so we come together and live piled up." As in the feuds, no one knows when the deaths will cease. The presence of death lays bare the very fiber of the Kaingáng personality, for it is in terms of this emotional amalgam in which anger and fear are indistinguishably fused that we must understand all of their behavior in times of stress.

In 1918 when the first wave of the grippe struck the Kaingáng, killing them in such numbers that their bodies lay about unburied until the dogs ate them, Thunder Storm rose up in his rage and fear and beat the air and trees with a club. "When disease came," said his son to me, "my father beat the trees because he was afraid of the supernatural beings (*nggĭyúdn*). He said, 'If I see you, I'll kill you. You are *waikayú*[1] and kill us all the time. So if I see you come to me, I'll kill you! The Brazilians kill my relatives; so out of revenge I destroy them when I see them! When I see them, I kill them, and I'll do the same to you—when I see you, I'll kill you!' He spoke thus as he beat the trees." Nothing could express this side of the Kaingáng character and world-view better. Here is condensed the Kaingáng frantic fear and anger at the forces of death, the equation of the supernatural with any other enemy, and the identification of the situation created by death with the vendetta tradition and revenge.

The Kaingáng not only fight with death; they also fly from it. That is why Waipó told me that we must move on when Ndíli's baby died, and that is why old Kakthí moved out of her house when the grippe descended again in 1933. "Why has she left her house?" said I to her son-in-law. "She is afraid of our sickness. She said, 'If I stay there, I'll get sick'; so she went away. She is in the forest to get away from it. She went to another place so our sickness would not see her." Poor Kakthí fled in vain, for she soon fell ill and died. "Her [dead] husband called her, and that is why she died. Our ghost-souls led her off, and that is why she died. Her husband's ghost-soul led her away, and that is why she died. She lay there telling about it, and then she died. The supernatural beings and her husband's soul led her away. He [her husband] led her away so that he might go with her."

The ghost-soul loves and pities the living whom it has deserted, but the latter fear and abhor the ghost-soul. The ghost-soul longs for those it has left behind, but they remain cold to its longing. "One pities one's children and therefore goes with them [i.e. takes them] when one dies. One loves [literally, lives in] one's children, and dies and goes with one's children, and one [i.e. the child] dies." The dead pity those they have left alone with

[1] Vicious, aggressive.

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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no one to care for them. They have left behind parts of themselves, for their children are those "in whom they live." But to the pity, love, and longing of the ghost-soul, the children return a cry of "Mother, leave me and go!" as she lies on the funeral pyre. The Kaingáng oscillate between a feeling of attachment for the dead and a desire never to see them again. Over and over again, their keening formulae repeat, "I desire to see my people," but the fear of seeing them is so great that some deny that they ever even dream of the dead. "I do not wish to get sick; that is why I never see my dead relatives," said Klendó.

The longing of the ghost-soul and its promise of good hunting is no more of an inducement to the Kaingáng to forsake this world than the glories of Paradise are to us. "A year[2] after my father died," said Vomblé, "I saw his soul. My brother was about to die, and probably my father came to call him. My father was about to talk to me. He said, 'I come to call you.' 'I don't want to go with you. My children are not here.' [Kulá, his wife, was away with her father.] 'But come with me to see my place. Leave your children and come with me.' 'No! Go! I won't go with you. Your ghost-soul went. I am not a ghost-soul. When you died, your ghost-soul went away and your children suffered. So I won't leave my children. If I die, all my children will go with me. But you left your children and things and went. I'll go to see your place and then come back, but I won't go with you. You live in a bad land. Your soul eats slugs that live in dead wood. My land is good. Women and game are plentiful. I will die when I am old. As I am now, I will not die. When I am old and weak, I will die.' When the others heard me talking, they shook me and told me why I was talking." This story expresses other things besides Vomblé's desire to live and his resentment against his father's ghost-soul. While Vomblé does not wish to be his father's companion in the other world, he declares that when he himself dies, he will take his children with him so that they will not suffer through his absence. The feeling of resentment at having been deserted by the dead runs through these accounts of experiences with the ghost-soul and integrates with the Kaingáng attitude toward social obligations.

There is another way in which Kaingáng life expresses itself in the emotional and imaginative streams that are loosed at death. The dead pass out of the embraces of the living, they are shut out of their lives in precisely the same way as members of other extended families; and they constantly threaten them with death. Their status is veritably that of "different things." When a man's ghost-soul came to call his sister, saying, "I have come to call you and your husband," she became angry with him and replied, "No! You are a different thing, and yet you come to me. They

[2] Literally—"one period of no pine nuts."

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killed you. When they killed you, I wandered around suffering, but you 768
come to call me!" When the ghost-soul at last went away, she was "all 775
green. She stood there without saying anything. He [her husband] said to her, 'Why are you green?' But she said nothing. She sat down holding on to a post. Then he asked if she was sick—if she had a pain in the belly. But she did not t[illegible]k. Wanenggló [her husband] asked her whether she had seen a gh[illegible]. Probably she saw a ghost-soul. But she did not say anything." Lik[illegible]detta enemies, the ghost-souls are "other things"—it is the only catego[illegible] Kaingáng have for those who dwell outside the limits of the extended families—and for people in this category they know only one emotion, fear-anger.

When the Kaingáng are drunk, their malevolent and fearsome impulses 152
rise to the surface, and the memory of death plays its part in this. Festa 579
time, when the beer troughs are brimming with the steaming, sourish, honey beer, is a special occasion for remembering the dead. It is also the occasion when recollections of adultery unpunished or of slights unrequited surge into consciousness. While some dance, sing, or brawl, others sit around the edge of the dance circle with their heads in their hands and tears streaming down their faces, and their sobs and high rhythmic keening mingle with the noise of quarreling and disordered singing. When they have done with their hour or so of weeping, they rise and fill their baskets or gourds with beer and join in the festa. No recollection of the dead can occur without unleashing fear, and fear cannot be liberated without the eruption of anger, so the memory of the dead only adds to the disruptive forces that are set in motion by the beer. The more one knows about the Kaingáng, the more one is struck by the extent to which the very roots of their being have been undermined and torn by impulses to violence. This is all the more amazing when we remember what affectionate people they seem to be—how much they love to multiply a hundredfold all kinds of personal attachments. Nevertheless, when drunkenness uncovers the Kaingáng personality, it does not bubble over in rivulets of tenderness, but pours out in torrents of violence. The only outlet is murder, and that is why festas, if not actually the scene of murders, used to be almost always the forerunners of raids on the Brazilians or on vendetta enemies. The Kaingáng themselves understand, in a way, what the festa meant to them, for they say, "We had festas in order to go to attack the Brazilians." Of course not every festa is characterized by violence, but many are.[8]

[8] Although the Kaingáng held an old-time beer festa at my request the aboriginal beer troughs have been superseded by jugs of sugar cane whiskey, and the tumultuous singing by the music of an accordion played by a white man. These changes, however, have not curbed the essential temper of the Indians, and fights still occur at festas. 534 273 177

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When a man dies, his most personal belongings, his bow and arrows and his lance and shirt and baskets, are destroyed. Theoretically everything else is, too, but actually the precious articles acquired from the Brazilians are kept—sometimes with apologies to the ghost. When Kakthí died during the epidemic of 1933 her son-in-law Yakwá could not endure to throw into her grave the beautiful steel knife she had inherited from her husband. So he kept it, and as she lay in her grave he spoke these words to her: *"Nyǫ́,* give me your knife—I am going to make it my own. Protect me from your husband—tell your husband that I took your knife. I have no knife; so I took it. Do not be angry with me. Do not leave me. If I fall ill I will ask you to protect me. I have given you all of your property and taken only the knife."

Every death can be explained in terms of a ghost that has followed the owner of some bit of property that belonged to it while it dwelt in a living body and rapt him away to bear it company. Blankets and, in recent times, clothing are always thrown away, for they have been in close contact with the deceased. Dogs, in spite of their great value, are frequently killed, for "they always used to go around with him" and have become too closely associated with the dead person to make it wholesome for the living to keep them about. Dogs that habitually hunt with large groups of human beings have very diffuse loyalties and will obey almost anyone, so that the death of their owner still does not render them useless. The iron pots are generally abandoned, for to the Kaingáng pots are much more than simple cooking utensils—they are symbols of the living organism,[10] and when death comes much of its affect crystallizes around them. The *thâpę́ya,* the widowed, must eat nothing from a pot until his isolation, his *waikómáng,* is terminated, nor could anyone who had killed a human being eat food cooked in a pot.[11] Thus, at death there is a general revulsion of feeling against those things that have been in close contact with the living, but the most valuable possessions are frequently kept in defiance of the *kuplêng.*[12] Knives, scissors, axes, and nowadays guns are the things most frequently kept, and the "inheritance" of these objects is most frequently within the immediate family, with the husband or the wife taking the greater part.[13] When an object has been "taken," however, its fate is by no means settled. Although Yakwá took Kakthí's knife, a few days later he had handed it over to Vomblé, his mother's brother's son.

But probably the most striking aspect of Kaingáng inheritance is the way

[10] See p. 184. The ancient clay pots were broken.

[11] For the further discussion of ideas and practices associated with death see Appendix III.

[12] Ghost-soul.

[13] This has been inferred from a large number of specific instances collected by going through a hundred cases of inheritance.

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in which the emphasis on obligations to relatives by marriage is followed through. Formerly if the dead man left any little children who had not yet had their lips pierced or their thighs pricked, a close relative, usually a brother, gathered the dead man's possessions together, prepared beer for the child's "blackening," and distributed the goods to the in-laws of the dead man. Perhaps the surviving relative also had children to blacken, and so on such an occasion his own property would also be distributed to his own in-laws.

Once property had been stolen from the Brazilians it flowed by gradual stages from the hands of the warrior into those of his relatives, and on his death it was either distributed to his in-laws or inherited by his wife and children. Societies like those of the Plains Indians of North America had made the distribution of property a device for the attainment of prestige, but when a Kaingáng gave away his booty he was doing simply what was expected of him as a relative. In many societies power tends to concentrate where property accumulates, but although the Kaingáng respect power they cannot tolerate any kind of intensification of it; for such intensification is felt by them to be disruptive. Through their insistence on the primary importance of the other person and their failure to reward achievement, the Kaingáng have suppressed processes that encourage the concentration of power in the hands of outstanding individuals.

The Meaning of the Feuds

One of the sources of aggression was the accumulation of resentments growing out of adultery and rejections by "deserting" relatives. Feuds and raids on the Brazilians provided substitute outlets for these resentments, and at the same time, by projecting the aggressions outside, operated to protect each extended family from internal disruption. A factor powerful in the perpetuation of the feuds is the Kaingáng feeling that once a force has been started it can never be stayed. Paralleling this on the human side is the belief that once a person has committed murder he will keep on.[14] With such a view of the natural world all that is necessary is that murder be committed once in order that there shall be perpetual distrust of the murderer. Given this attitude, the distinction in emotional ties within and between the extended families, and the peculiar social outlook of the Kaingáng, it is easy to see why things should have taken the turn they did: since murderousness is the attribute not only of individuals but also of groups, the groups suspect—and slay—one another forever.

[14] A parallel to this is not hard to find in our own society, for we believe that "a leopard cannot change its spots," and "once a criminal always a criminal." One of the fundamental bases of the theory of capital punishment is that a murderer must be got out of the way because he is likely to commit another murder under similar circumstances.